Jodhpur Tragedy

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THROW AWAY THE CARCASS

Everyone knows the story of Sindbad the Sailor and the Old Man of the Sea who would not get off his shoulders. To say that Sindbad is India and that the Old Man of the Sea is Britain would cause no surprise. It is a perfectly apt simile, and for Britain to expect India's cooperation is like the Old Man of the Sea asking for Sindbad's cooperation in resisting an assailant without getting off Sindbad's back.

But in a recent interview Gandhiji reversed the simile and likened Britain and the Allies to Sindbad carrying a heavy carcass on his shoulders and appealed to them to throw away the carcass if they would have victory. "India has no heart in the War, in fact she has her eyes on Japan. You may today be denuding her of her resources, but they are the resources of an unwilling India. India is thus a corpse — a heavy carcass of which the weight might make your victory impossible. If by some chance England comes to her senses — the Allies come to their senses — and say, 'let us get rid of this carcass', that single act will give them a power which no military skill or resources and no amount of American help can give them." This is what Gandhiji said to Mr. Preston Grover, the representative of the Associated Press of America, who came specially from Delhi to have his interview.

It was as usual a day of broiling heat and heavy work. Gandhiji had offered to go to Wardha to have his talk with the Maulana who has been keeping indifferent health, rather than let him go to Sevagram. As we went the car broke down about six furlongs from Shethji's bungalow. Gandhiji got down and began to walk in the blazing sun. I could not keep pace with him and collapsed after I had walked a furlong or two. It was only when I got a tonga, on coming round, that I got to the bungalow when Gandhiji had already got there. He evidently can bear this terrible heat, as it is nothing compared to the blazing furnace that is burning within him, and it was to share it with the Maulana that he went to Wardha. After a full two hours' talk with the Maulana and Jawaharlalji, he asked Mr. Grover to come in, and poured out his heart's agony before him for about an hour. "There has been a great deal of questioning in America and India as to the nature of your activities during the balance of the War. I should like to know what it will be like," said Mr. Grover. "But can you tell me when the War will end?" said Gandhiji laughing.

It Will Be Felt by the World

Coming to the point Mr. Grover said again: "There is a good deal of speculation that you are planning some new movement. What is the nature of it?"

"It depends on the response made by the government and the people. I am trying to find out public opinion here and also the reaction on the world outside."

"When you speak of the response, you mean response to your new proposal?"

"Oh yes," said Gandhiji, "I mean response to the proposal that the British Government in India should end today. Are you startled?"

"I am not," said Mr. Grover, "you have been asking for it and working for it."

"That's right. I have been working for it for years. But now it has taken definite shape and I say that the British power in India should go today for the world peace, for China, for Russia and for the Allied cause. I shall explain to you how it advances that Allied cause. Complete independence frees India's energies, frees her to make her contribution to the world crisis. Today the Allies are carrying the burden of a huge corpse — a huge nation lying prostrate at the feet of Britain, I would even say at the feet of the Allies. For America is the predominant partner, financing the war, giving her mechanical ability and her resources which are inexhaustible. America is thus a partner in the guilt."

"Do you see a situation when after full independence is granted American and Allied troops can operate from India?" Mr. Grover pertinently asked.

"I do," said Gandhiji. "It will be only then that you will see real cooperation. Otherwise all the effort you put up may fail. Just now Britain is having India's resources because India is her possession. Tomorrow whatever the help, it will be real help from a *free* India."

"You think India in control interferes with Allied action to meet Japan's aggression?"

"It does."

"When I mentioned Allied troops operating I wanted to know whether you contemplated complete shifting of the present troops from India?"

"Not necessarily."

"It is on this that there is a lot of misconception."

"You have to study all I am writing. I have discussed the whole question in the current issue of *Harijan*. I do not want them to go, on condition that India becomes entirely free. I cannot then insist on their withdrawal, because I want to resist with all my might the charge of inviting Japan to India."

"But suppose your proposal is rejected, what will be your next move?"

"It will be a move which will be felt by the whole world. It may not interfere with the movement of British troops, but it is sure to engage British attention. It would be wrong of them to reject my proposal and say India should remain a slave in order that Britain may win or be able to defend China. I cannot accept that degrading position. India free and independent will play a prominent part in defending China. Today I do not think she is rendering any real help to China. We have followed the non-embarrassment policy so far. We will follow it even now. But we cannot allow the British Government to exploit it in order to strengthen the strangle-hold on India. And today it amounts to that. The way, for instance, in which thousands are being asked to vacate their homes with nowhere to go to, no land to cultivate, no resources to fall back upon, is the reward of our non-embarrassment. This should be impossible in any free country. I cannot tolerate India submitting to this kind of treatment. It means greater degradation and servility, and when a whole nation accepts servility it means good-bye for ever to freedom."

India's Gains from British Victory?

"All you want is the civil grip relaxed. You won't then hinder military activity?" was Mr. Grover's next question.

"I do not know. I want unadulterated independence. If the military activity serves but to strengthen the strangle-hold, I must resist that too. I am no philanthropist to go on helping at the expense of my freedom. And what I want you to see is that a corpse cannot give any help to a living body. The Allies have no moral cause for which they are fighting, so long as they are carrying this double sin on their shoulders, the sin of India's subjection and the subjection of the Negroes and African races."

Mr. Grover tried to draw a picture of a free India *after* an Allied victory. Why not wait for the boons of victory? Gandhiji mentioned as the boons of the last World War the Rowlatt Act and martial law and Amritsar. Mr. Grover mentioned more economic and industrial prosperity — by no means due to the grace of the government, but by the force of circumstances, and economic prosperity was a step further forward to Swaraj. Gandhiji said the few industrial gains were wrung out of unwilling hands, he set no store by such gains after this war, those gains may be further shackles, and it was a doubtful proposition whether there would be any gains — when one had in mind the industrial policy that was being followed during the war. Mr. Grover did not seriously press the point.

What Can America Do?

"You don't expect any assistance from America in persuading Britain to relinquish her hold on India," asked Mr. Grover half incredulously.

"I do indeed," replied Gandhiji.

"With any possibility of success?"

"There is every possibility, I should think," said Gandhiji. "I have every right to expect America to throw her full weight on the side of justice, if she is convinced of the justice of the Indian cause."

"You don't think the American Government is committed to the British remaining in India?"

"I hope not. But British diplomacy is so clever that America, even though it may not be committed, and in spite of the desire of President Roosevelt and the people to help India, it may not succeed. British propaganda is so well organised in America against the Indian cause that the few friends India has there have no chance of being effectively heard. And the political system is so rigid that public opinion does not affect the administration."

"It may, slowly," said Mr. Grover apologetically.

"Slowly?" said Gandhiji. "I have waited long, and I can wait no longer. It is a terrible tragedy that 40 crores of people should have no say in this war. If we have the freedom to play our part we can arrest the march of Japan and save China."

What Do You Promise to Do?

Mr. Grover, having made himself sure that Gandhiji did not insist on the literal withdrawal of either the British or the troops, now placing himself in the position of the Allies, began to calculate the gains of the bargain. Gandhiji of course does not want independence as a reward of any services, but as a right and in discharge of a debt long overdue. "What specific things would be done by India to save China," asked Mr. Grover, "if India is declared independent?"

"Great things, I can say at once, though I may not be able to specify them today," said Gandhiji. "For I do not know what government we shall have. We have various political organisations here which I expect would be able to work out a proper national solution. Just now they are not solid parties, they are often acted upon by the British power, they look up to it and its frown or favour means much to them. The whole atmosphere is corrupt and rotten. Who can foresee the possibilities of a corpse coming to life? At present India is a dead weight to the Allies."

"By dead weight you mean a menace to Britain and to American interests here?"

"I do. It is a menace in that you never know what sullen India will do at a given moment."

"No, but I want to make myself sure that if genuine pressure was brought to bear on Britain by America, there would be solid support from yourself?"

"Myself? I do not count — with the weight of 73 years on my shoulders. But you get the cooperation

— whatever it can give willingly — of a free and mighty nation. My cooperation is of course there. I exercise what influence I can by my writings from week to week. But India's is an infinitely greater influence. Today because of widespread discontent there is not that active hostility to Japanese advance. The moment we are free, we are transformed into a nation prizing its liberty and defending it with all its might and therefore helping the Allied cause."

"May I concretely ask — will the difference be the difference that there is between what Burma did and what, say, Russia is doing?" said Mr. Grover.

"You might put it that way. They might have given Burma independence after separating it from India. But they did nothing of the kind. They stuck to the same old policy of exploiting her. There was little cooperation from Burmans, on the contrary there was hostility or inertia. They fought neither for their own cause nor for the Allied cause. Now take a possible contingency. If the Japanese compel the Allies to retire from India to a safer base, I cannot say *today* that the whole of India will be up in arms against the Japanese. I have a fear that they may degrade themselves as some Burmans did. I want India to oppose Japan to a man. If India was free she would do it, it would be a new experience to her, in twenty-four hours her mind would be changed. All parties would then act as one man. If this live independence is declared today I have no doubt India becomes a powerful ally."

Mr. Grover raised the question of communal disunion as a handicap, and himself added that before the American Independence there was not much unity in the States. "I can only say that as soon as the vicious influence of the third party is withdrawn, the parties will be face to face with reality and close up ranks," said Gandhiji. "Ten to one my conviction is that the communal quarrels will disappear as soon as the British power that keeps us apart disappears."

Why not Dominion Status?

"Would not Dominion Status declared today do equally well?" was Mr. Grover's final question.

"No good," said Gandhiji instantaneously. "We will have no half measures, no tinkering with independence. It is not independence that they will give to this party or that party, but to an indefinable India. It was wrong, I say, to possess India. The wrong should be righted by leaving India to herself."

C. R.

"May I finally ask you about your attitude to Rajaji's move?"

"I have declared that I will not discuss Rajaji in public. It is ugly to be talking *at* valued colleagues. My differences with him stand, but there are some things which are too sacred to be discussed in public."

But Mr. Grover had not so much in mind the Pakistan controversy as C. R.'s crusade for the formation of a national government. Mr. Grover had the discernment to make it clear that C. R. "could not be motivated by British Government. His position happens to harmonise with them."

"You are right", said Gandhiji. "It is fear of the Japanese that makes him tolerate the British rule. He would postpone the question of freedom until after the war. On the contrary I say that if the war is to be decisively won, India must be freed to play her part today. I find no flaw in my position. I have arrived at it after considerable debating within myself; I am doing nothing in hurry or anger. There is not the slightest room in me for accommodating the Japanese. No, I am sure that India's independence is not only essential for India, but for China and the Allied cause."

"What are the exact steps by which you will save China?"

"The whole of India's mind would be turned away from Japan. Today it is not. C. R. knows it, and it worries him as it should worry any sane patriot. It worries me no less, but it drives me to a contrary conclusion. India lying at the feet of Great Britain may mean China lying at the feet of Japan. I cannot help using this language. I feel it. You may think it startling and big. But why should it be startling? Think of 400 million people hungering for freedom. They want to be left alone. They are not savages. They have an ancient culture, ancient civilisation, such variety and richness of languages. Britain should be ashamed of holding these people as slaves. You may say: 'You deserve it!' If you do, I will simply say it is not right for any nation to hold another in bondage."

"I agree," whispered Mr. Grover.

"I say even if a nation should want to be in bondage it should be derogatory to one's dignity to keep it in bondage. But you have your own difficulties. You have yet to abolish slavery!"

"In United States, you mean?"

"Yes, your racial discrimination, your lynch law and so on. But you don't want me to remind you of these things."

Sevagram, 11-6-42 M. D.

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HARIJAN

June 21 **1942**

JODHPUR TRAGEDY

(By M. K. Gandhi)

As I had feared, Jodhpur satyagraha has taken a serious and ugly turn. Heaps of paper have come in. From these I gather that arrests are multiplying. Lathi-charges are a daily occurrence. Official circulars have been issued prohibiting the use of private premises by satyagrahis. In fact all the worst things that were experienced during the satyagraha campaigns in British India are being repeated in Jodhpur. Only in Jodhpur they are being done far from the public gaze and a first class tragedy may pass unnoticed and may be buried like many such that have been buried and are being buried even today. The cause of all these troubles is one and so is the remedy. Till it is successfully applied, the painful drama will continue in some shape or form. The British Government cannot escape blame and responsibility for every such happening in the States. It is bound by treaty obligation to protect the people of the States from inhumanities such as those going on in Jodhpur in the name of law and order. The prisoners have no respite even behind the prison bars. The food is bad, usual facilities are denied to them. By way of protest Shri Jai Narayan Vyas has undertaken a hunger-strike till the grievances are redressed or unto death. If he has to die, the death will be upon those who are primarily responsible for the grievances which compel hunger-strikes unto death. Dr. Dwarkanath Kachru has sent an instructive note on Jodhpur from which I take the following for public information:

" The direct authority of the Jodhpur Government extends over 17 % of the total area of the State; the remaining area — about 83 % — is owned by the Jagirdars, about 1300 in number. These Jagirdars are mostly autonomous internally and pay fixed tributes to the Maharaja.

" For a long time now the Political Department has been controlling the affairs in Jodhpur. Thrice during this century the State passed under the direct control and supervision of the Political Department. At present Englishmen — a large number of them—occupy prominent positions in the State. The prime minister is also a retired British official.

" Apart from the British officials, other non-State subject elements also predominate in the State administration. There is thus a " Mulki Movement " which is becoming stronger day by day. There is also a very strong rivalry between the different castes, Rajputs, Brahmins etc., which is very often exploited by the government to play one against the other or to prevent the Lok Parishad from growing stronger.

" The Marwar Lok Parishad, formed in 1938, became, during the course of these four years, a tremendous force in Jodhpur. Because of the general political backwardness of the Rajputana States, a more advanced 'mass movement in Jodhpur was destined to lead the vanguard of the popular movement in the whole of Rajputana. An All Rajputana Political Conference was also announced to be held in Jodhpur in March 1940. The mass awakening in Rajputana caused grave anxiety to the Political Department and the Jodhpur Government was instructed to act promptly. The Jodhpur Government therefore declared the Lok Parishad illegal and put all its prominent men in jails. Mass arrests, followed by terrible repression, ended in a compromise with the Government. Marwar Lok Parishad began its constructive work once again and soon came to be recognised by all the people in Marwar, both in the *khalsa* and *jagiri* territories. The Parishad contested the Municipal elections and emerged as the majority party in the Board. Its leader became the chairman.

" Since the war began the governments of Indian States have changed their attitude towards popular movements. The war had in fact provided as excuse to suppress civil liberties and check the growth of popular forces. In Jodhpur, where the Political Department has a hand in shaping the policy of the government, Prime Minister Sir Donald Field, set to work according to the instructions from above. Funds had to be procured for war and the whole State had to be put on war footing. Money had largely to be procured from the Jagirdars, who must in turn be protected against the popular movement in the Jagirs led by the Lok Parishad. The State Government thus assumed an attitude of neutrality towards the Jagirs and allowed the Jagirdars to squeeze even the last drop of blood from their subjects.

" But the Lok Parishad could not ignore the grievances and demands of the masses of Marwar living in Jagirs. The Parishad did not want the abolition of the Jagirs, but it certainly wanted the betterment of the people of Jagirs. Repeated requests were made to the government to intervene and secure a just and a humane treatment for the tenants in Jagirs, but unfortunately the government chose to act differently. They encouraged the Jagirdars and suppressed the Lok Parishad workers. Briefly stated the conditions in Jagirs are: (a) the tenants demand regular *latai* (allocation of the shares of the Jagirdars and their tenants). But the Jagirdars would not arrange to do it regularly and often evaded with the result that the tenants suffered, (b) the tenants also want the abolition of such cesses which have been declared illegal in the courts of the States.

" The Government of Jodhpur repeatedly refused to come to the help of the tenants and even refused to stop the exaction of such cesses which were declared illegal in their own courts of law. The Government went a step further and encouraged the Jagirdars themselves to take up cudgels aginst the Lok Parishad. Thus when the

Jagirdars beat and victimised and even burnt the houses of the Parishad workers the government refused to intervene."

Sevagram, 14-6-42

QUESTION BOX

(By M. K. Gandhi)

Its Meaning

Q. What is the meaning of your appeal to the British power to withdraw from India? You have written much recently on the subject. But there seems to be confusion in the public mind about your meaning.

A. So far as my own opinion is concerned, British authority should end completely irrespective of the wishes or demand of various parties. But I would recognise their own military necessity. They may need to remain in India for preventing Japanese occupation. That prevention is common cause between them and us. It may be necessary for the sake also of China. Therefore I would tolerate their presence in India not in any sense as rulers but as allies of free India. This of course assumes that after the British declaration of withdrawal there will be a stable government established in India. Immediately the hindrance in the shape of a foreign power is altogether removed the union of parties should be an easy matter. The terms on which the Allied powers may operate will be purely for the Government of the free state to determine. The existing parties will have dissolved into the National Government. If they survive they will do so for party purposes and not for dealings with the external world.

What about Non-Violence

Q. But what about your non-violence? To what extent will you carry out your policy after freedom is gained?

A. The question hardly arises. I am using the first personal pronoun for brevity, but I am trying to represent the spirit of India as I conceive it. It is and will be a mixture. What policy the National Government will adopt I cannot say. I may not even survive it much as I would love to. If I do, I would advise the adoption of non-violence to the utmost extent possible and that will be India's great contribution to the peace of the world and the establishment of a new world order. I expect that with the existence of so many martial races in India, all of whom will have a voice in the government of the day, the national policy will incline towards militarism of a modified character. I shall certainly hope that all the effort for the last twenty-two years to show the efficacy of non-violence as a political force will not have gone in vain and a strong party representing true non-violence will exist in the country. In every case a free India in alliance with the allied powers must be of great help to their cause, whereas India held in bondage as she is today must be a drag upon the war-chariot and may prove a source of real danger at the most critical moment.

What about Radio Messages?

Q. You do not hear the radio messages. I do most assiduously. They interpret your writings as if your leanings were in favour of the Axis powers and you had now veered round to Subhas Babu's views about receiving outside help to overthrow the British rule. I would like you to clear your position in this matter. Misinterpretation of your known views has reached a dangerous point.

A. I am glad you have asked the question. I have no desire whatsoever to woo any power to help India in her endeavour to free herself from the foreign yoke. I have no desire to exchange the British for any other rule. Better the enemy I know than the one I do not. I have never attached the slightest importance or weight to the friendly professions of the Axis powers. If they come to India they will come not as deliverers but as sharers in the spoil. There can therefore be no question of my approval of Subhas Babu's policy. The old difference of opinion between us persists. This does not mean that I doubt his sacrifice or his patriotism. But my appreciation of his patriotism and sacrifice cannot blind me to the fact that he is misguided and that his way can never lead to India's deliverance. If I am impatient of the British yoke I am so because India's sullenness and suppressed delight of the man in the street over British reverses are dangerous symptoms which may lead to the success of Japanese designs upon India, if they are not dealt with in the proper manner; whereas India finding herself in possession of complete freedom will never want the Japanese to enter India. India's sullenness and discontent will be changed as if by magic into joyful and hearty cooperation with the Allies in consolidating and preserving her liberty from any and every evil design.

Sevagram, 12-6-42

Notes

Education through Handicrafts

Shrimati Ashadevi sends the following interesting figures:

"The 27 basic schools in the small compact area in the Bettiah Thana, Dist. Champaran, Bihar, completed three years of work in April 1942. The annual economic chart of Grade I, II and III of these schools for the year 1941-42 makes encouraging study for all workers of basic education. The chart will be published in detail in '*Nai Talim*', the monthly organ of basic education. Here we give a brief summary of the principal facts for all who are interested in the progress of basic education. The average attendance for these 27 schools is 70% in Grade I, 76% in Grade II and 79% in Grade III; the average individual earning is 0-11-0 in Grade I, Rs. 2-4-2 in Grade II and Rs. 6-1-1 in Grade III. The total earning of 390 (number based on average attendance) children of 10,264 total hours of work in all the schools is Rs. 267-8-6 in Grade I, of 356 (number based on average attendance) children of 14,082 total hours of work in all the schools is Rs. 804-13-8 in Grade II, and of 319 (number

based on average attendance) children of 14,362 total hours of work in all the schools is Rs. 1,935-14-11 in Grade III, i. e. the total earning of 1,065 children is Rs. 3008-2-1 for the whole year. The average maximum individual earning of these schools is Rs. 15-12-0 in Grade III, Rs. 6-2-0 in Grade II and Rs. 2-10-1 in Grade I. The average maximum speed is 480 rounds per hour on the charkha and 281 rounds per hour on the takli for Grade III; 350 rounds per hour on the charkha and 242 rounds per hour on the takli for Grade II; and 164 rounds per hour on the takli for Grade I."

These figures are not given to show the output and the income, important as they are in their place. The output and the income have a secondary place in an education chart. But they are given to demonstrate the high educational value of handicrafts as a means of training the youth. It is clear that without industry, care and attention to detail the work could not have been done.

M. K. G.

Only if They Withdraw

"Till the last day you said there can be no Swaraj without Hindu Muslim unity. Now why is it that you say that there will be no unity until India has achieved independence", the Nagpur correspondent of the *Hindu* asked Gandhiji the other day.

Gandhiji replied, "Time is a merciless enemy, if it is also a merciful friend and healer. I claim to be amongst the oldest lovers of Hindu Muslim unity and I remain one even today. I have been asking myself why every whole-hearted attempt made by all including myself to reach unity has failed, and failed so completely that I have entirely fallen from grace and am described by some Muslim papers as the greatest enemy of Islam in India. It is a phenomenon I can only account for by the fact that the third power, even without deliberately wishing it, will not allow real unity to take place. Therefore I have come to the reluctant conclusion that the two communities will come together almost immediately after the British power comes to a final end in India. If independence is the immediate goal of the Congress and the League then, without needing to come to any terms, all will fight together to be free from bondage. When the bondage is done with, not merely the two organisations but all parties will find it to their interest to come together and make the fullest use of the liberty in order to evolve a national government suited to the genius of India. I do not care what it is called. Whatever it is, in order to be stable, it has to represent the masses in the fullest sense of the term. And, if it is to be broad-based upon the will of the people, it must be predominently non-violent. Anyway, upto my last breath, I hope I shall be found working to that end, for I see no hope for humanity without the acceptance of non-violence. We are witnessing the bankruptcy of violence from day to day. There is no hope for humanity if the senseless fierce mutual slaughter is to continue."

Sevagram, 11-6-42 M. D.

A RURAL ANTHOLOGY

IV

Not only clothes and shoes but even tools were made in the cottage factory. As James Nasmyth writes in his autobiography:

"Peter Stubbs's files were so vastly superior to other files, both in the superiority of the steel and in the perfection of the cutting, which long retained its efficiency, that every workman gloried in the possession and use of such durable tools. Being naturally interested in everything connected with tools and mechanics, I was exceedingly anxious to visit the factory where these files were made. I obtained an introduction to William Stubbs, the head of the firm, and was received by him with much cordiality. When I asked him if I might be favoured with a sight of his factory, he replied that he had no factory as such; and that all he had to do in supplying his large warehouse was to serve out the requisite quantities of pure cast steel as rods and bars to the workmen; and that they on their part forged the metal into files of every description at their own cottage workshops..."

And apart from the manufacture of clothes and other things of domestic use, cottage industries enabled women in some cases to earn as much money as the menfolk, and even children took part in them with benefit to the family purse and without any undue strain upon themselves. Mr. T. Hennell writes in *Change in the Farm*:

"The commonest sort [of straw-plait] was made by boys and children and paid for at the rate of five pence a score [twenty yards]. It was quite usual for children to be made to plait a score between coming out of school and going to play. For......elaborate plaits women were often paid half a crown or three shillings a score and so were able to earn eighteen shillings a week, while their husbands got only sixteen shillings a week as labourers. They had to buy the straw which they used, but this was not a heavy proportion of the cost. Thirty yards of fine plait or twenty-six of coarser quality went to make a hat. No doubt it is a craft which could well be revived with much advantage to many British farmers and cottagers, but it has almost been killed by Japanese plaits and coarse rye-straw imported from France."

V

Mr. Bell's delightful little volume not only tells us about the handicrafts practised in the British countryside; it also lets us catch a glimpse of the fine character which "living in constant touch with nature and face to face with reality" (C. J. Sharp) enables the countryman to build for himself.

For one thing a villager often sleeps under the sky, and "sleeping. . . . under the sky, you come to find out for yourself what nobody taught you at school—how Orion is sure to be not there in summer, and Aquila always missing in March, and how the Great Bear, that was straight overhead in the April nights, is wont to hang low in the north in the autumn. Childish as it may seem to the wise, a few years' nightly view of these and other

invariable arrangements may give a simple soul a surprisingly lively twinge of what the ages of faith seem to have meant by the fear of God — the awesome suspicion that there is some sort of fundamental world order or control which cannot by any means be put off or dodged or bribed to help you to break its own laws" (C. E. Montague, *Disenchantment*).

The sympathy and solidarity which unite the members of a village community have been exquisitely described by Mr. W. H. Hudson (*A Traveller in Little Things*):

"I imagined the case of a cottager at one end of the village occupied in chopping up a tough piece of wood or stump and accidentally letting fall his heavy sharp axe on to his foot, inflicting a grievous wound. The tidings of the accident would fly from mouth to mouth to the other extremity of the village, a mile distant; not only would every individual quickly know of it, but have at the same time a vivid mental image of his fellow villager at the moment of the misadventure, the sharp glittering axe falling on to his foot, the red blood flowing from the wound; and he would at the same time feel the wound in his own foot, and the shock to his system."

And hospitality is of course a characteristically rural virtue. Mrs. Burrows in her *Life As We Have Known It* tells us how along with forty other children she used to work fourteen hours a day in the fields about the middle of the nineteenth century. One day "the cold east wind, . . . the sleet and snow. . . . seemed almost to cut us to pieces. . . . Well, the morning passed somehow. . . . Dinner time came, and we were preparing to sit down under a hedge and eat our cold dinner and drink our cold tea, when we saw the shepherd's wife coming towards us, and she said to our ganger, 'Bring these children into my house and let them eat their dinner there.' We went into that very small two-roomed cottage and when we got into the largest room there was not standing room for us all, but this woman's heart was large even if her house was small, and so she put her few chairs and table out into the garden and then we all sat down in a ring upon the floor. She then placed in our midst a very large saucepan of hot boiled potatoes, and bade us help ourselves. Truly, although I have attended scores of grand parties and banquets since that time, not one of them has seemed half as good to me as that meal did. I well remember that woman. She was one of the plainest women I ever knew; in fact she was what the world would call quite ugly, and yet I can't think of her even now without thinking of that verse in one of our hymns where it says:

'No, Earth has angels though their forms are moulded
But of such clay as fashions all below,
Though harps are wanting, and bright pinions folded,
We know them by the love-light on their brow.'"

We will close with Mr. Alexander Somerville's description in *Autobiography of a Working Man* of a stone mason Alick F—, who gave him some new ideas about the killing of birds and beasts. He said it was mean to put down a snare and catch a hare in the dark. He ridiculed the delight which people took in shooting. "I was with him one wintry day on the sea-shore......He was quarrying stones in a sheltered nook, and I had taken my gun, because it was a stormy day, to have a shot at the sea-birds, which could be more easily reached in tempestuous weather than at other times. Thus we met. In the midst of our geological speculations......and just as we had admired the magnificence of a wave which seemed in itself to be a sea risen on end to overwhelm the land, I saw a redshank on the wing, which I thought was within shot, and snatched up the gun to shoot it. He stopped me on the instant and said, 'Let it go! What if the hand, which has more power over that ocean and these waves than you have over that gun and the shot within it, were to have as little mercy for living things? What, if you and I were redshanks, or that all this nation was as but one redshank, and the author of this storm, which permits that redshank to live which you would have killed, should have lifted his arm against us?'"

(*Concluded*)

V. G. D.

AMERICAN RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

The treatment of the Negro by the whites in America and racial discrimination operating against him in various walks of life has been discussed in these columns already. A brief reference may now be made to America's policy of racial discrimination against Asiatics — especially the Chinese who are now America's allies. The February number of *Asia* contains a studiedly objective article on the subject by Dr. Spinks who makes out a strong plea for the immediate repeal of Chinese exclusion. Says Dr. Spinks: "Today the future of the United States has become more dependant than ever before upon our relations with the millions of inhabitants of Asia. Whether in war or in peace, whether as enemies or friends, we must henceforth deal with all these peoples upon a basis of equality. We cannot inspire their confidence in our efforts to make this a better world for humanity if our own laws and policies so glaringly place the Asiatic races in a different category from the rest of mankind." The plea is thus made both on the grounds of justice and expedience, though it is little realised that true justice is always the best expediency.

Dr. Spinks complains that "by our own action we ourselves are today violating two of the essential principles" for the violation of which the Axis powers are being strongly condemned. "By our immigration laws, the United States not only excludes over one quarter of the human race from the application of justice and equality, but singles out the Chinese people for a "most shameful and categorical form of discrimination." He mentions the various measures on the statute book of the United States of which the very purpose is exclusion and discrimination. The United States Immigration

Law of 1924 excludes no Chinese or any other race as such, but excludes those who are ineligible to American citizenship, and the Supreme Court decisions in several cases have ruled that Asiatic races — including Indian — are ineligible for citizenship. Thus the Chinese, the Indians, the Japanese are all debarred except " in case of certain exempt classes (students and merchants) who can enter and reside here temporarily. "

This however was what may be called dealing injustice to all Asiatics with an even hand. But China was singled out more especially than others, as we shall presently see. " The American Treaty with China of 1894 gave the United States the right to suspend *all* immigration for ten years. In 1902 Chinese exclusion was applied to the American insular possessions, and finally in 1904 the Chinese exclusion acts were made perpetual "— and this is in force in spite of the all-comprehensive law of 1924, and thus " the United States has singled out the Chinese by name for categorical discrimination and exclusion." A section of an Act of 1884 makes it obligatory for a Chinese holding passports to have in addition to the passport which does define his occupational status a certificate to the effect that the holder intends to make a temporary visit to the United States. " By this provision the United States in effect does not recognise a passport of the Government of China, which is fully tantamount to not recognising the sovereign power of that country."

" The only bar to immigration based on race ", says the Encyclopaedia Brittanica, " was the prohibition, since 1888, of Chinese immigration and the practical exclusion of Japanese labourers by a ' gentlemen's agreement ' with the Japanese Government." Also, " the Chinese decreased in number, as might be expected from the policy of exclusion; in 1910 there were 71,531 and in 1920, 61639. The number of Japanese however increased from 72,157 to 111,010, or 53.9 per cent." The Tables for Immigrant Aliens by country and by race give no figures of Asiatics or Orientals, which means that they are nil or negligible.

But to proceed. The Chinese are " justly sensitive and resentful " over a provision in the law prohibiting them from marrying women of their home-land and bringing them to the United States permanently. The Chinese population in America " is overwhelmingly male ", and the resentment is thus natural.

Then the Chinese, as distinguished from all other Asiatic or non-Asiatic races, " must enter the United States at certain designated ports " — apart from the discourtesy that legitimate Chinese immigrants too often meet with at the hands of immigration officials.

The Chinese have felt the sting of the racial insult, and Dr. Spinks notes that the first anti-foreign boycott in China in 1905 was " directed against the United States over our exclusion policy. " Japan could make of the question a burning international political issue as she had attained the position of a " great " power, but it was precisely because Japan did so that it is said that the whole question of Asiatic immigration was prejudiced. The argument that unless Asiatics are specifically banned, they will in some way or other enter the United States in such numbers as to bring about serious economic and social problems, is dismissed by Dr. Spinks as fallacious, because if the quota system of 1924 which is applied to non-Asiatics were applied to the Asiatics there would be little social or economic disaster. This quota system consists of permission to all non-Asiatic nations to send as immigrants two per cent. of its population resident in the U. S. A. in 1890. Dr. Spinks calculates that if this system were to be applied to Asiatics " only about two thousand Chinese, a mere handful of Indians and other Asiatics and (when the war is over) only a hundred and eighty Japanese could enter the United States annually. Despite their racial and cultural differences, such meagre numbers could not conceivably give rise to economic and social problems." It may be interesting to note in this connection the figures of Asiatic population in the U. S. A. In 1870 there were 63,119 Chinese and 75 Japanese there. In 1930 there were 74,954 Chinese (16 per cent. increase in 60 years), but the Japanese had increased to 138,834 (because of gentleman's agreements with the Great Asiatic power) and other Orientals were only 50,978 in a total population of 12 crores. (Statesman's Year Book, 1937.) While the war lasts even if a partial open door was declared on the quota basis there would be little Chinese immigration.

Dr. Spinks dismisses equally summarily the legal argument—viz., the sovereign right to exclude certain races. This is nothing, says he, before the " broader, more fundamental principle of *racial equality which has been a vital part of our national policy and which today is prerequisite to our concept of a new world order.* " In other words, rather than indulge in big talk of a new world order, make the just and righteous beginning now, and free yourselves of the charge of hypocricy.

Sevagram, 11-6-42 M. D.

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